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A

RELATION

OF

Dr. DODD's BEHAVIOUR

In NEWGATE,

ACCORDING TO THE

Rev. Mr. VILLETTE the Ordinary's ACCOUNT,

WITH

REFLEXIONS thereon;

AND THE

DOCTOR's LAST SOLEMN DECLARATION.




PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1777.

Price TWO-PENCE.





A
RELATION
OF THE
BEHAVIOUR of Dr. DODD
IN NEWGATE, &c.

 DOCTOR DODD, though by his own confession he had for some past years indulged himself in a voluptuous life, yet, after his confinement, lived with great temperance, according to Mr. Villette the Ordinary of Newgate's account; though he might, as he himself said, have lived luxuriously, through the benevolence of his friends.

He employed part of his time in amending a Book of Devotions for the Use of Prisoners, written by one Rossell, as appears by a letter he wrote to the Ordinary :

“ DEAR SIR,

“ In consequence of our conversation, I have
“ perused Rossell's book† with attention. There
“ is a great deal of good matter in it, but ill-di-
“ gested, and often very ill expressed. I have been
“ at much pains to reform what appeared to me
“ erroneous, and to arrange what is irregular and
“ con.

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† A book of devotions for the use of prisoners.

“ confused: To say the truth, I have spent many
 “ hours in an endeavour to render his work more
 “ uniform, and consequently more useful. How
 “ far I have succeeded, I cannot tell; for I freely
 “ own to you, that his multiplicity of chaotic
 “ matter has often so entangled and perplexed me,
 “ that I have been scarce master of my own ideas,
 “ and, I verily believe, could have composed a
 “ work on the subject with less trouble than it
 “ has cost me to revise this. And, after all, I am
 “ doubtful whether the upshot of the matter, in
 “ this arrangement, will not be the same with me
 “ as with those who, under a notion of saving ex-
 “ pences, repair, add to, and reform an old build-
 “ ing, which, after all, is but an old one, and in
 “ the end commonly turns out as expensive, tho’
 “ by no means so commodious, as one entirely
 “ new would have proved. Of this, however,
 “ you, Sir, must be the best judge, whose expe-
 “ rience on these heads is preferable to any mere
 “ ideas of my poor brain, especially in its present
 “ disturbed and unsettled state. Had I been master
 “ of more leisure, or longer time, I think I could
 “ have made the book better, and more calculat-
 “ ed to answer its humane design. As it is, and
 “ solicitous as I am to improve every moment in
 “ my present awful state, you will accept what I
 “ have done as a little tribute of my good-will
 “ to you, and as a proof that I am desirous, in
 “ every situation, to do all in my humble power
 “ to contribute a mite to the best welfare of my
 “ fellow-creatures. I could wish that a short
 “ Address to my unhappy fellow prisoners, which
 “ I have written, and will communicate to you,
 “ might be prefixed to the work; as, perhaps,
 “ from the sad singularity of my unfortunate cir-

“ cum-

“ cumstances, it may gain more attention from
 “ them than the much better labours of another
 “ person. That God may bless and assist you in
 “ the performance of your doleful, but necessary
 “ and important office, is, Sir, the fervent prayer
 “ of Your dying brother,

“ (In our common Lord)

“ WILLIAM DODD.”

He was led by the flattery of his friends, before the order for execution arrived, that he should find mercy. One of his friends had, some days before, sent him a congratulatory letter upon obtaining his pardon, which he told him he heard was procured through the intercession of the Prince of Wales. His mind was, in consequence, greatly agitated between hope and fear, so that he had a very distressed night before the order came, and was not well prepared for the dreadful news. His friends begun to open it to him by degrees, but he requested them to tell him the truth at once; for he imagined by their countenances how the matter was. He told the Ordinary soon after, that he had only indulged himself for the three preceding days with hopes of mercy from what his friends had said to him; for that he had all along, even from his first entrance into the goal, given himself up as a lost man. After the first shock of the news of his being included in the death warrant was subsided, he became more composed, and his mind, in general, intent upon a preparation for death.

During his confinement he had a number of letters sent to him from different persons, among which was the following letter from the Right Honourable the Countess of Huntingdon:

A 2.

“ Reverend

“ Reverend Sir,

“ FROM the first hearing of your unfortunate
 “ situation, I could not look for any less supplies
 “ of support and comfort for you, than to Him
 “ who chose for our sakes to be numbered with
 “ the transgressors. You are master of every rational and scripture argument, and in this, perhaps, inferior to few. And I earnestly pray
 “ God these may have their place, and their times
 “ of consolation for you.

“ But reason, or the wisest conclusions drawn
 “ from even truth itself, neither removes the stings
 “ of guilt, nor possesses the soul with that peace
 “ which ever passes the best informed understanding. O no! nothing but that voice of Almighty power that spoke from the cross to your
 “ suffering companion there, can be your point
 “ now : And we all, like him, must pass sentence
 “ upon ourselves, and say, *We indeed receive the*
 “ *due reward of our deeds.* How soon the welcome request, *Lord remember me, &c.* reached
 “ the heart of our Divine Substitute ! how speedy
 “ the relief ! how lasting and complete the comfort ! The meaning of my prayers and tears
 “ for your grief, would have no other language
 “ but, *Go, and do thou likewise.* Forgive, and do
 “ not wonder you should find my views so limited
 “ as this seems for your only relief. Were life
 “ extended to its latest possible period, the alone
 “ solid or well-grounded hope of happiness must
 “ subsist purely by this interior blessing ; as making the little good we have on earth have all its
 “ safety, and all the various evils of a miserable
 “ world wisely or rationally supported by it. Thus
 “ every thing unites to render the importunity of
 “ your suffering heart the happy subject of this
 “ mercy.

“ mercy. This mercy, once obtained, will bear
 “ you through the fluctuating emotions, and va-
 “ rious views of life and death, which so imme-
 “ diately and naturally operate upon you, and
 “ even cause you to glory in tribulation.

“ May you thus rejoice in the truth and power
 “ of that religion you have so long professed and
 “ taught to others, and becoming a witness of our
 “ Saviour’s grace to sinners, be enabled to preach
 “ the best sermon you ever preached in your life,
 “ and to people the most miserable and ignorant
 “ of the high Christian privilege of salvation by
 “ the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ! Should
 “ he answer the affectionate cries of his poor un-
 “ worthy people for you, and that arm of infinite
 “ consolation be stretched out for your strength
 “ and eternal blessedness, how little will the appen-
 “ dages of death appear, which to mere suffering
 “ nature is so bitter; and how thankfully will
 “ you see Justice and Mercy thus met together,
 “ and mixed in that cup, so severe in the eyes of
 “ others; or should the tender compassions of
 “ Royal Mercy be extended to save from the pre-
 “ sent suffering hour, yet only in life, or in the
 “ more remote event of death, this grace must be
 “ the one cause of praise, through time and eterni-
 “ ty for you. It is for this I would most affec-
 “ tionately recommend you day and night. And
 “ it is to him who is able to do abundantly above
 “ all we can ask or think; and thus I beg to
 “ remain a sympathising friend, and, Reverend
 “ Sir, your humble servant,

S. Wales.

“ S. HUNTINGDON.”

Books of very different contents were also sent
 to him; so that he had such a collection of dif-

ferent systems of doctrine forced upon him in books and letters, as might, according to the Ordinary's expression, distress and perplex any human being. He was also visited by persons of very different sentiments and complexions, but always mentioned his satisfaction when visited by men of sense and piety. Among others, he spoke respectfully of Mr. Wesley, and likewise of Mr. Romaine, who paid him a visit a short time before his death : From the last of these gentlemen he received peculiar comfort, and said that they parted mutually satisfied. He frequently appeared to have a deep sense of his past offences ; and expressed, when he reflected upon the great love of God in the redemption of the world through Christ, his unworthiness, and a great abhorrence of his ingratitude towards him in having deviated from him and his divine precepts : this he often did with tears. He frequently bemoaned his having brought such dishonour upon religion, and upon the sacred function ; and declared, with great emotion, that if he could wipe off the offence he had thus given, he would gladly submit to the greatest tortures ; and would rather die than return into the world again to offend his God, and act inconsistent with his holy will. He often expressed his willingness to die a natural death, but painful apprehensions of a public execution, attended with all the tragic, and yet disorderly, parade usual in this country. He spoke of the execution of others who had suffered on account of their crimes, and said he did not think that heroism was a proper state of mind for such ; humble hope was the highest they could aspire to : heroism and triumph belonged to martyrs. He uttered frequently his thankfulness that he had enjoyed so much composure of mind, health,
and

and comfortable rest, free from any distressing dreams, since his confinement, and found himself more happy after his detection than before. He said that he esteemed his affliction as a fatherly correction from God, to bring him into those paths of rectitude from which he had for some years erred.

The day before his execution, he expressed what a trial it would be to take a final leave of his wife, who had been remarkably affectionate to him during the twenty-seven years they had been married. In the evening of the same day, after he was in his room, he said, *Now the bitterness of death is past.* He then related that he had taken a tender leave of his friends, and from his dearest friend, his wife. He said, "I was much afraid of this scene, but it passed over much easier than I could have possibly imagined, and Mrs. Dodd behaved on the occasion better than I expected : we parted as those who hope to meet again." He declared repeatedly, and yet with deep contrition, his readiness to die, and that he relied wholly and confidently on the merits of his Lord and Saviour. He spoke of the love of God in Christ Jesus with peculiar energy, and with such a sense of his own unworthiness, as was a proof that he was sincere, and that his resignation to the execution of justice was not at all dissembled, but genuine. He praised the Lord for the great work of redemption, by which sinners could be saved ; and compared the great difference between the death of the most renowned Heathens, who lost all sight of their evil actions, and that of the humble, contrite Christian, who saw at one view the wisdom, holiness, and justice of God, and at the same time his infinite love and mercy in the salvation of sinners by Jesus Christ. He had some-

times expressed his thoughts about our penal laws, that they were too sanguinary; that they were against not only the laws of God, but of nature; and that his own case was hard; that he should die for an act which he always declared to be wrong, but by which he never intended to injure any one individual; and that as the public had forgiven him, he thought he might have been pardoned. But now he laid all these thoughts touching himself aside, though he continued to think in the same manner of the penal laws to his end.

Upon the coming in of a faithful and steady friend, and a Clergyman, he said, among other things, "I have requested of my friends to-day what I now request also of you. It is possible that, after my death, some of my kind friends, who have so earnestly solicited my pardon, but in vain, and others, may charge the King and his Counsellors with cruelty, and use improper language, out of love to me; make it known, that I declare this to be far from my thoughts: I love and honour the King; I doubt not his humanity: he and his Counsellors have acted according to justice, and his Majesty would have extended mercy, if he could have thought it consistent with the welfare of the nation." He then lifted up his hands, and prayed, "O Almighty God, thou King of Kings, bless our gracious King; support and strengthen him, establish his throne in righteousness; give peace in his day, O Lord; make an end of dissension, and put a stop to the present unnatural war. O give his Counsellors wisdom, and bless them. Amen." After this, going to prayer, he shed many tears, and concluded with saying, "O Lord Jesus Christ, let a poor sinner yet speak unto thee, though unworthy: O strengthen my faith,

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comfort and support me, have mercy upon me, and forgive me my sins, for the sake of thy holy, precious blood. Amen." He said, that if the Lord would leave it to his choice to be now annihilated, by which means all would be over, or that he should die, and stand the chance of eternal life, or eternal misery, he would not give up his hope of the glorious inheritance, no, not for ten thousand worlds.

On the morning of his execution he appeared composed, and being asked how he had been supported, he said he had had some comfortable sleep, whereby he should be the better enabled to perform his duty. In the Vestry, adjoining to the Chapel, he exhorted his fellow-sufferer, who had attempted to destroy himself, but had been prevented by the vigilance of the Keeper. He spoke to him with great tenderness and emotion of heart, entreating him to consider that he had but a short time to live, and that it was highly necessary that he, as well as himself, made good use of their time, implored pardon of God under a deep sense of sin, and looked to that Lord by whose merits alone sinners could be saved. He lifted up his hands, and cried out, "O Lord Jesus, have mercy upon us, and give, O give unto him, my fellow sinner, that as we suffer together, we may go together to Heaven." His conversation to this poor youth was so moving, that tears flowed from the eyes of all present.

In the Chapel at prayer, and the holy communion, true contrition and warmth of devotion appeared evident in him throughout the whole service. After it was ended, he again addressed himself to Harris in the most moving and persuasive manner, and not without effect; for he declared
that

that he was glad he had not made away with himself, and said he was easier, and hoped he should now go to Heaven. The Doctor told him how Christ had suffered for them; and that he himself was a greater sinner than he, as he had sinned more against light and conviction, and therefore his guilt was greater; and that as he was CONFIDENT that mercy was shewn to his soul, so he should look to Christ, and trust in his merits.

He prayed God to bless his friends, who were present with him, and to give his blessing to all his brethren, the Clergy; that he would pour out his spirit upon them, and make them true ministers of Jesus Christ, and that they might follow the divine precepts of their heavenly Master. Turning to one who stood near him, he stretched out his hand, and said, "Now, my dear friend, speculation is at an end: all must be real! What poor ignorant beings we are!" He prayed for the Magdalenes, and wished they were there to sing for him the 23d Psalm.

After he had waited some time for the Officers, he said, "I wish they were ready, for I long to be gone." He requested of his friends, who were in tears about him, to pray for him; to which he was answered by two of them, "We pray more than language can utter." He replied, "I believe it."

On his seeing two prisoners looking out of the windows in the yard, he went to them, and exhorted them so pathetically, that they both wept abundantly. He said once, "I am now a spectacle to men, and shall soon be a spectacle to angels."

Just before the Sheriff's Officer came with the halters, one who was walking with him, told him
that

that there was yet a little solemnity he must pass through before he went out. He asked, "What is that?" "You will be bound." He looked up, and said, "Yet I am free, my freedom is there," pointing upwards. He bore it with Christian patience, and beyond what might have been expected; and when the men offered to excuse tying his hands, he desired them to do their duty, and thanked them for their kindness. After he was bound, the Ordinary offered to assist him with his arm; but he replied with seeming pleasure, "No! I am as firm as a rock." As he passed along the yard, the spectators and prisoners wept and bemoaned him; and he, in return, prayed God to bless them.

On the way to execution he consoled himself in reflecting and speaking on what Christ had suffered for him; lamented the depravity of human nature, which made sanguinary laws necessary; and said he could gladly have died in the prison-yard, as being led out to public execution tended greatly to distress him. He desired the 51st Psalm to be read to him, and also pointed out an admirable penitential prayer from Rossell's Prisoner's Director. He prayed again for the King, and likewise for the people.

When he came near the street where he formerly dwelt, he was much affected, and wept. He said, probably his tears would seem to be the effect of cowardice, but it was a weakness he could not well help; and added, he hoped he was going to a better home.

When he arrived at the gallows, he ascended the cart, and spoke to his fellow-sufferer. He then prayed, not only for himself, but also for his wife, and the unfortunate youth that suffered with him;
and

and declaring that he died in the true faith of the gospel of Christ, in perfect love and charity with all mankind, and with thankfulness to his friends, he was launched into eternity, imploring mercy for his soul, for the sake of his blessed Redeemer.

Dr. DODD's last SOLEMN DECLARATION, which he intended should have been read for him by the Ordinary at the Place of Execution, but was omitted, as supposing it would not be heard.

TO the words of dying men regard has always been paid. I am brought hither to suffer death for an act of fraud, of which I confess myself guilty with shame, such as my former state of life naturally produces, and I hope with such sorrow as He, to whom the heart is known, will not disregard. I repent that I have violated the laws by which peace and confidence are established among men : I repent that I have attempted to injure my fellow-creatures ; and I repent that I have brought disgrace upon my order, and discredit upon religion : but my offences against God are without name or number, and can admit only of general confession and general repentance.—Grant, Almighty God, for the sake of Jesus Christ, that my repentance, however late, however imperfect, may not be in vain.

The little good that now remains in my power, is to warn others against those temptations by which I have been seduced. I have always sinned against conviction : my principles have never been shaken : I always considered the Christian religion as a revelation from God, and its Divine Author

as the Saviour of the world ; but the laws of God, tho' never disowned by me, have often been forgotten. — I was led astray from religious strictness by the delusion of shew, and the delights of voluptuousness. I never knew or attended to the calls of frugality, or the needful minuteness of painful oeconomy. Vanity and pleasure, into which I plunged, required expence disproportionate to my income ; expence brought distress upon me ; and distress, importunate distress, urged me to temporary fraud.

For this fraud I am to die ; and I die declaring, in the most solemn manner, that however I have deviated from my own precepts, I have taught others, to the best of my knowledge, and with all sincerity, the true way to eternal happiness. My life, for some few unhappy years past, has been dreadfully erroneous, but my ministry has been always sincere. I have constantly believed, and I now leave the world solemnly avowing my conviction, that there is no other name under Heaven by which we can be saved, but only the name of the Lord Jesus ; and I intreat all who are here to join with me in my last petition, that, for the sake of that Lord Jesus Christ, my sins may be forgiven, and my soul received into his everlasting kingdom.

June 27, 1777.

WILLIAM DODD.

REFLEXIONS *on the foregoing* ACCOUNT.

ALTHOUGH it is right to say nothing to increase the pangs of a dying criminal, or, indeed, of any other dying man ; although it does not become us to put any limits to the Divine Good-

Goodness and Mercy ; yet it seems to have a tendency to destroy all care and vigilance in regard to a Christian life among the people to inculcate to them in the strongest manner, that they may be saved in the last hour, and even have assurance of it, if they but cry out for mercy, & lay hold of the merits of a Saviour, and the like, even tho' they have been offenders against the eternal and immutable laws of justice, virtue, and goodness, and all the precepts of Christ, their whole lives, and are under the immediate terrors of undergoing capital punishment, before they turn to God or Christ. This doctrine has been greatly inculcated of late years among the people, by those who go under the denomination of Methodists, whether preaching in churches or out of them. There was scarce a criminal suffered at Bristol for some years past, but a late Clergyman who attended Newgate there, it is said, if they expressed contrition, and a faith and trust in the merits of Christ, gave the firmest assurance to of their being saved, or admitted into Heaven ; and not only so, but, in the accounts published of them, he assured the public they were so. In some of his accounts he has said the *Sun of Righteousness* broke out upon them, as they were carrying to the gallows, and the like. In short, no good man, after the most perfect life, could be spoken of with greater confidence as admitted into Heaven.

However well-meaning this Clergyman might be, (and that he was well-meaning, and a good man, there is great reason to think) yet such declarations must appear to be prejudicial to society, as tending to lessen that care and diligence in the whole conduct of our lives, which the Scripture positively assures us is necessary to make our calling
or

or salvation sure. It is not a few texts of Scripture, probably, greatly misunderstood, that we ought to rest so extremely an important matter on, but on the whole tenor of Scripture, and the nature and reason of things. And it may be affirmed that neither of these will support, or give any foundation to these late assurances. It is not a rant of words, by whomsoever uttered, makes the truth of things, nor being worked up to an idea of inward feelings : sober reason and reflexion will build nothing upon these.

We find in the foregoing account the Doctor telling Harris, his fellow convict, (who seems to have been of the most abandoned principles, and quite incorrigible, as he had been but a few months before condemned for a robbery to work on the Thames, but escaping from thence, returned to robbing again,) “ *That Christ had suffered for them, and that he himself was a greater sinner than he, as he had sinned more against light and conviction, and therefore his guilt was greater ; and that as he himself was CONFIDENT that mercy was shewn to his soul, so he (Harris) should look to Christ, and trust in his merits.*” He prayed also, that as they suffered together, they might go together to Heaven ; and we are told Harris was, in a very short space of time, brought to say, that *he hoped now he should go to Heaven.*

However well-meaning and benevolent Doctor Dodd might be in this, whatever he might think on the subject, the publishing of such things must certainly tend to make Christians believe they may at any time obtain Heaven by only crying out for mercy, shedding tears, and pleading, or laying hold of (as the expression is) the merits of Christ. That however they pass their lives with a spirit,
or

or in a manner altogether opposite to the spirit of Christ, yet they may, by calling upon him in their very last moments, be received by him as his friends into Heaven : Tho' Christ has pronounced them only to be his friends who keep his commandments ; nor does it appear he ever pronounced any others to be so. The circumstances of the thief on the cross are so peculiar, and we know so little about them, that no foundation can be built thereon.

If we consult reason, or the nature of things, nothing is more evident, with respect to a future life, than that this life must be a state of preparation, or of qualifying us for the future life ; and that in this state we must get habits and qualities to fit us for that. It is by the improvement of our nature here that it is fitted for an higher state hereafter. This seems the design of God ; this the constitution of things which he has settled. God is, without doubt, as one of the Apostles has defined him, LOVE ; he is also *merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin*. But yet he will not alter the nature or constitution of things. "*They that take no delight in the exercise of virtue in this state,* (says Dr. Whichcot, one of our most judicious Divines) *if, after this life, God should remove them into Heaven, they would take little satisfaction in the place, because of an unsuitable frame of spirit. For men must be suitable to the object in the enjoyment of which they receive satisfaction. Therefore suppose (though it is IMPOSSIBLE) that a man not renewed in his spirit, nor refined in his temper, that God, by power, should remove such a man into Heaven ; when he came thither he would not be satisfied either in the persons, or in the employment of that place, because all these would be contrary*

trary unto him. Therefore it is ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY that we should, by GOODNESS here, QUALIFY and PREPARE ourselves for happiness hereafter : For there is no happiness in the meeting of things that are unlike. Whichcot's 6th Sermon, p. 441. So that, according to the opinion of this judicious Divine, who certainly searched the Scriptures as much as Mr. Romaine, Mr. Rouquet, Dr. Dodd, or any such have done, there is no foundation for the hope of such easy admission into Heaven to those who have passed their lives in profligacy and injury, merely upon their crying out for mercy, and pleading the merits of Christ at their last hour, when a capital punishment stares them in the face, and which they know they must undergo. But there is no occasion to rest the matter upon what this Divine has said, however judicious, as we have what Christ has said. In Luke ch. xiii. 25, &c. we find him representing the case of those who had lived wicked lives, and not attended to his admonitions and precepts, calling upon him at the last, and his answer thereto : *Then shall ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us ; and he shall answer, and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are ? Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drank in thy presence ; and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are : Depart from me all ye workers of iniquity.* In Matthew, ch. vii. 21, &c. we find him speaking still more express to the purpose : *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven ; but he that doeth the WILL of my FATHER which is in Heaven. Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have not we prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have*

cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them I never knew you: Depart from me ye that work iniquity.

Here we see those who had past their lives in iniquity are rejected, notwithstanding their cries and prayers. In the 7th chapter of Matthew, ver. 13, 14, we find Jesus saying to his Disciples, *Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Because STRAIT is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* But surely if Christians can lead wicked lives, and follow their own inclinations in every thing, till the few last hours of their life, and then, by crying to Christ, and pleading his merits, be admitted into Heaven; surely this can, with no propriety, be called a *strait gate to life* that few can find; Jesus Christ could not have spoken in this manner, had he conceived of Christians entering into life by such a way. In like manner we find the cry of the foolish virgins, who had not oil in their lamps, (*that is, had not acquired any habits of real virtue and piety*) availed nothing; tho' with bitter tears, and in the most earnest manner, it may be supposed, they supplicated *Lord, Lord, open unto us.* But he answered and said, *Verily I know you not.*—This indicates that Christ had no thought of past negligence being to be retrieved by any expedient, or of favour being to be obtained by any importunity.

The parable of the marriage feast, wherein was found one who had not a wedding garment on, and thereupon was cast into outward darkness, indicates that we cannot be partakers of the happiness of Heaven, unless we have led such a life here as may qualify us for it.—*Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you,* says Christ to his Disciples, John ch. xv. 14. But we find in no place or text whatsoever, that he indicated they should ever be his friends that did not do what he commanded, or lead a life here according

cording to his precepts. " Those who do not live as Christ has commanded, (says Justin, one of the Primitive Fathers of the Church) are not Christians, although they bear the name, and although they can repeat by heart all the precepts and doctrines of Christ ; because he has pronounced to be *saved*, not those who talk of them only, but those who practise them."--Other texts or sayings of Christ, and indeed his whole teaching, might be produced to this purpose. But we will proceed to what his Apostles have said and practised. St. Paul, explaining what the doctrine of the Gospel is, in his Epistle to the Romans, Ch. ii. 5, and following verses, says, *There will be a day of revelation of the righteous judgement of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds : To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour, and immortality, eternal life : But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath ; tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil : but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good : For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified, in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel.*—Again, St. Paul says, 2 Cor. v. 9. 10. *Wherefore we labour that we may be accepted of him : For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*—Again, Galatians ch. vi. 7, and following. *Be not deceived ; God is not mocked : for whatsoever a man soweth, that he shall also reap : For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption : But he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting. If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die ; but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.* Paul tells us too what he built his own hope of salvation on. *I keep under* (says he to the Corinthians) *my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a CAST-AWAY,* 1 Cor. ix. 27.

Here St. Paul plainly fixes the foundation of his final salvation on his subduing his animal nature, or his bodily appetites and affections, bringing them under subjection to reason and the laws of Christ. Tho' he perfectly understood the gospel, though he had preached and taught it to others, and converted vast numbers, and though he had the gifts of the spirit in a high degree, yet he absolutely fixes his attaining to everlasting life and happiness upon his own strenuous endeavours to live according to the precepts of Christ, by taking every possible method, using every care, employing every motive, and watching over every thing, to subdue his animal to his spiritual nature. This is all implied in the expression of St. Paul, *I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away.*

Does St. Paul here give the least indication that he had any hope of being saved by crying out in his last hour to Jesus Christ, pleading his merits and mediation? This certainly he would have done here, had he had any notion of a salvation to be obtained in that way. But he fixeth his hope of eternal happiness on his strenuous endeavours to lead a life agreeable to the precepts of Christ.—In another place, just at the close of life, he fixes his firm expectation of happiness in Heaven on what he had done; on his having persevered in living a virtuous life. *I have fought a good fight, (says he) I have finished my course; I have kept the faith; I have been faithful, and never swerved from the precepts of Christ. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me.*—Here, by the expression *righteous Judge*, it is plain St. Paul expected to be judged agreeable to what he has said elsewhere, *according to the works he had done in the body*; and to receive a crown of righteousness, or an immortal and heavenly life, on account of his righteousness, or what was, through the goodness and will of God, due to him, for his having perseveringly led a virtuous life in this world.

What

What doth it profit, (says another Apostle) though a man says he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. By works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Epistle of St. James, Ch. ii. 14, and following verses.

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says expressly, *Without holiness no man shall see the Lord: Follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord—the Lord Jesus in Heaven.* They ought well to observe this who think it sufficient for our salvation that Christ hath been holy, and plead it, and rest upon it, for their acceptance. St. Paul tells us that *the grace of God, which bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; and that Christ gave himself for us.*—Let us mind for what St. Paul says *he gave himself for us*; not that we should plead his merits, or that he should save us by his mediation, whether worthy or not. St. Paul indicates not a tittle of this, but says only and expressly, that *he gave himself for us, to redeem us from all iniquity*; THAT IS, as the next words explain it, that we should leave all wickedness; and that so he might *purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of all good works.*—It would be to copy almost the whole New Testament to copy all the texts to this purpose.

The case of the penitent thief on the cross, upon which so much is improperly founded, is so vastly different from that of any other dying person born and educated under the religion of Christ, that there is no just ground to build the final acceptance of any Christian of the present time on the like foundation. And a Divine of the present time has observed, that if it is the design of God finally to restore the most flagrant sinners after this manner, the gospel instructions are but of little use, and the virtues and piety of good Christians but of small advantage. Not the least stress, therefore, can, with any reason, or consistent with the tenor of the New Testament throughout, be laid upon the acceptance of the penitent on the cross for any Christian at present to hope acceptance on the like footi

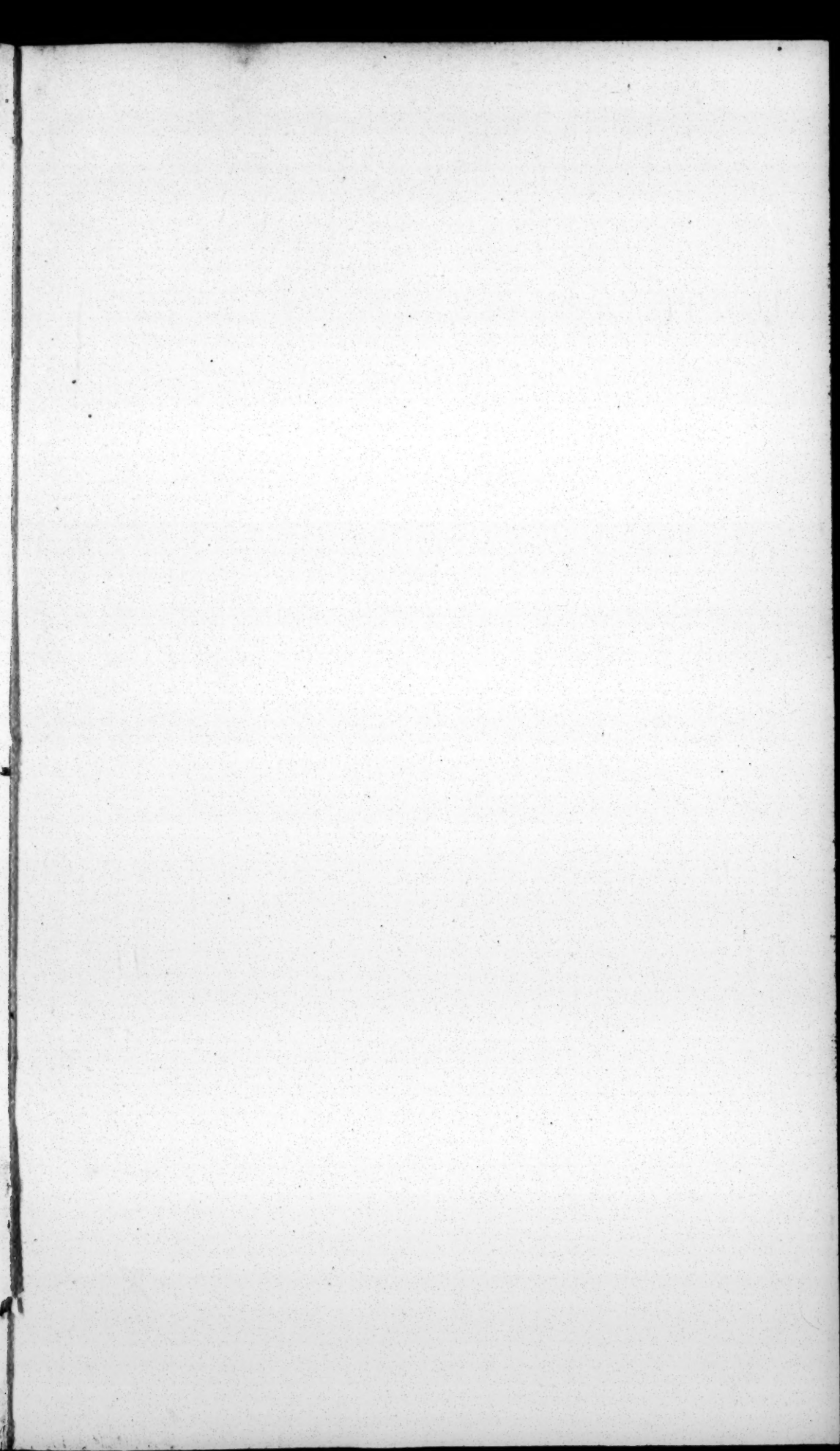
Thus

Thus from attending to reason, and the essential nature of things, and also to the main tenor of the New Testament, which whoever will read with due attention, and without prejudice, will see to be as has been set forth in the preceding quotations from it, we shall find that the only way to enjoy happiness in another world, is to live virtuously and holily in this. And to this may be added, as a corroborating circumstance, the universal sentiments of the primitive Christians; among whom we find, by the history of them, that nothing was spoken of as giving any ground for an entrance into Heaven, but living a good life here. It was not till the professors of Christianity began to be corrupt in their manners, that the professed teachers of it began, in order to soothe and speak smooth things to their hearers, to substitute something besides a pure, holy, and blameable life, as a means of admittance into the kingdom of Heaven; and from hence arose extreme unction, absolution, prayers for the dead, and the like, in the Romish church; and unhappily we have something of the like tendency in our own; and of late years have greatly encreased among us preachers who, either through ignorance or design, not only substitute something else for the attainment of eternal life, besides a pure, just, and holy life, but even *before* it; for they will pronounce the most abandoned sinner all his life, for merely expressing in his last moments a contrition, and pleading the merits and mediation of Christ, as certainly admitted into Heaven, whilst they will insinuate those who have led good lives, as shut out, if they do not feel, or pretend to feel, this resting upon the merits of Christ, and the like. Surely if there is any understanding of the plainest and most numerous texts of the New Testament, and the whole tenor of it, (and certainly such may be understood) such preachers may justly be said, as Christ said of the Scribes and Pharisees of old, to make *the commandments of God of none effect*. Such preachers deceive the people, if not themselves, by laying hold of some particular texts of Scripture, which, according to the most judicious Divines and commentators, and the whole

whole tenor of the New Testament, are, and ought to be understood of the Dispensation of the Christian Religion, or as relating to those to whom it was first propagated, and not to individual Christians, or those of the present age. According to the most judicious expositors of Scripture, what is said Acts Ch. iv. 12, *there is no other name under Heaven (but the name of Jesus Christ) given among men, whereby we must be saved; neither is there salvation in any other,* signifies no more than that there is no other among men, neither Patriarch, Prophet, or King, by whom God had declared to the world a remission of all past sins which had afore been committed, and the reward of eternal life, on condition of acknowledging Jesus as their Lord and Master, or Instructor, and in consequence living according to his precepts. Whoever considers the context with attention, will see this to be the sense of this place. In like manner the answer given by St. Paul to the question of the goalor, *What shall I do to be saved?* implies his forsaking what sins he had lived in, and leading a good life for the future; for this throughout the New Testament is the absolute condition of, and the full meaning of *believing in the Lord Jesus Christ*. And all the expressions where Christ is spoken of as *saving the world*, will, upon examination, and comparing them with other texts, and the whole tenor of the New Testament, be found to signify *saving* them by turning them by his doctrine and precepts from a wicked to a virtuous course of life, & so *making them* MEET to be inheritors of eternal life. And all the expressions of Christ *coming into the world to save sinners*, will be found to mean nothing more than calling them to repentance, and such a course of life for the future as would fit them for eternal life. See Matthew ix. 13. Mark ii. 17. Luke v. 22. And what is said of *the forgiveness of sins* through Christ, or by his Name, will be found, upon considering the whole tenor of the New Testament, to be spoken of that plenary forgiveness which God published by him to the race of mankind then upon the earth of all their past sins, if so be they received the revelation of his will made by Christ, and lived according to his precepts for

for the time to come. At the time of Christ's and his Apostles preaching the Gospel, the whole Gentile world was immersed in gross idolatry, and consequently in a state of revolt or apostacy from God; they were also almost universally living in the most flagitious wickedness. See Romans i. 18. and following verses. The Jews also, in general, were grievous sinners against the law of everlasting righteousness. And therefore God publishing by Christ to such heinous offenders a full pardon for all their past offences, receiving them into his favour, on their turning from the wicked course of life they had lived in, and putting them in the way of obtaining eternal life, by giving them the precepts and example of Christ to follow as a sure guide thereto, was an astonishing act of grace or Divine love, and is therefore justly spoken of in the highest terms, and merits our admiration, and to raise in us the most exalted conceptions of the goodness and mercy of the Divine Being, which cannot be sufficiently magnified.

Nothing that has been said in these reflexions is intended to be applied to the unhappy persons whose case gave occasion to them; God grant, if agreeable to his constitution of things, their hopes may not be disappointed; but these reflexions were written solely to warn others not to think, from a few texts of the New Testament not rightly understood, that they can attain to glory and honour, and immortality, in another world, but by living *soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world*. They will find, notwithstanding what preachers may tell them, who study to speak *smooth things* to them, and to affect their passions rather than their reason, if they will consider the whole tenor of the New Testament, that there is no condition offered them of obtaining *eternal Life*, independent of living *soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world*. God grant that every one may attend to this, and not deceive themselves in this most important of all matters by vain hopes, for which there is no proper foundation in the Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ.



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